

GUIDE

TO

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

Vol. VII.

MAY, 1845.

No. 5.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNINGS.

WORTH OF THE PROMISES—WANDERINGS IN PRAYER—INTELLECTUAL FAITH—SUDDEN DEATH.

You speak of *wanderings in prayer*. I am a sister in tribulation with you in this matter. But all I can do is to cast myself on Jesus, as a *Savior*, to save me from *cherishing* them. He knows my integrity, and I dare to believe he pities me, when I repeatedly say before him—"I hate vain thoughts;" and does not the *fact* that we so truly abhor them, assure us that they are only a class of those endless temptations from without, which so long as we are in an enemy's land we may expect? I have thought that it is only because the *enemy* conceives he can *perplex* me more at present, with this mode of warfare, that he so long persists.

You also observed, that "when laboring with others endeavoring to encourage, &c., you are so tried within." Can you expect otherwise than that Satan should withstand you, when you are endeavoring to do the work of your *Master*? The warfare is not so much against *you*, as against the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ. He is at enmity with *God*, and to the degree you exert an influence in bringing souls under the reign of Christ, in a proportionate degree Satan will try to perplex, and in every possible way withstand you.

But, dear sister, did you not make use of too strong language in speaking of "*endless doubtings*." You surely do not, in thus laboring with others, or in giving in your testimony, *doubt* whether you will be sustained? You labor

for, and with others, because the Holy Spirit moves you to it. What other influence could move you to labor for the establishment of the Kingdom of your Redeemer in the hearts of others — Satan divided against himself cannot stand.

You desire to be delivered from these, so that you may bear a "stronger testimony." I think I sometimes give in a *stronger testimony* when tempted to doubt, than when all is quiet. If Satan could induce me to yield so far as to weaken my testimony, it would on my part be a partial closing in with his designs, and doubtless if he should succeed once, it would only embolden for an attack on every such occasion. So I make it a point, when most powerfully tempted, to speak most *confidently*. You may wonder, but I have proved the benefit of this course. At the Tuesday meeting two or three weeks since, I practised on this principle precisely. The *accuser* for several days had been withholding me at every point. He would fain have accused me in every word, thought or action. Added to this, sensible assurances of the love of my Savior were in a great measure withheld; and thus, with an indescribable sense of unworthiness, but with a consciousness of resting on *Christ*, I gave in a "*stronger testimony*" than usual. The feeling that passed my soul was, that of defying Satan in the name of *Christ*, the enemy every moment saying that my state of grace did not warrant the testimony I had given. After I had finished, I felt such a conscious victory over the power of darkness that my soul was filled with triumph. I afterward enjoyed blessed satisfaction in telling them, that the strong testimony I had given in was not founded on any state of *feeling* I at the time enjoyed, but because I knew I was by faith resting on *my Savior*, and by virtue of reposing on *him*, I knew I was resting on the strong basis of his immutable word to bear me out in saying all I had said, and even in using much stronger language if it were possible.

You know Israel *tempted* God, in saying, "*Is the Lord with us or not?*" Let us not tempt him by doubts, either in *thought* or *expression*. We cannot honor God more than by trusting him. Let us "*trust in him and not be afraid.*" If we were continually possessed of *sensible* manifestations, should we have occasion to exercise our *trust* in God? *Trust*, and *faith*, seems to imply much the same thing, and neither favors the idea of long-continued *sensible* manifestations. You may remember part of your letter was in allusion to this subject.

When I set out to *live* a life of faith on the Son of God, I counted the cost. I thought of the father of the faithful, who "by faith journeyed not knowing whither he went," and made up my mind that I would be contented to follow God blindfolded as long as I lived, if such were his requirement. I saw *holiness* to be a *state* of soul in which all the powers of body and mind were given up to God, and I perceived that the enjoyments of this state was in perfect consistency with extreme sorrow, as well as with exceeding great joy. Through grace I was enabled to say

" Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
Take life or friends away."

These were among my first expressions on entering upon this *state*. It has often since been suggested that I gave myself up so fully to live a life of *faith*, that God has taken me at my word. And, would you believe, the enemy sometimes tries to tempt me to be *sorry* for it. But he has never succeeded in causing me to regret it for one moment. But you would hardly conceive how often he tries to make me think my faith a mere *intellectual knowledge*. I meet him with saying, it is founded on principles laid down in the eternal mind, and consequently immovable in *faithfulness*. God has promised such results as the *fruits* of faith. I trust him, and on the authority of *his own word* declare in *strongest testimony* his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises. The *fruits* of holiness follow—I dare not doubt it. A consuming zeal in the cause of God, which gathers within its grasp my whole being, is continually inspiring corresponding efforts. “My soul shall make her boast in the Lord, and the *humble* shall hear thereof and be glad.” “One promise is worth more than a mountain of gold reaching to the heavens.” How rich are we. Unto us are given great and precious promises. I found an inestimably precious gem a few days since, which, in view of what my temptations had been, was precisely in point. “*Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy time, and strength of salvation*:* the fear of the Lord is his treasure.” Isa. xxxiii. 6. Satan seems to have mostly done with my *intellectual* faith since. I must confess, dear sister, that I have through grace a good hope of immortality and eternal life. Our hope relative to seeing each other is deferred. But as it is by our Heavenly Father’s appointment, our hearts are not sick; with us

“ This note above the rest does swell,
Our Jesus hath done all things well.”

We are *sisters in the Lord*, and our hearts are united for *eternity*, and as we are only to take in a small fraction of *time* here, we will rejoicingly say,

“ No matter what cheer
We meet with on earth; for eternity’s here !”

Time seems very short, and I have some thoughts I would love to express; but I see your affectionate heart is too easily moved, but you well know how often people have impressions which are never realized. But I will say that a sudden departure from earth seems to me calculated to glorify God, just as much, if not more, than a pretracted illness. And if either our beloved brother or sister were thus taken by comparative surprise, and required to “open immediately,” I should think of it as in the case of Emory. The Church was then roused through the length and breadth of the land, to feel the solemn import of the words, “Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.”†

* *Salvations.* Margin.

† I have written very hurriedly, as you may suppose; I was somewhat turned from my purpose after commencing this paragraph, and it conveys a different meaning from what I intended.

I am trying to have my work "*all done up*," and what my hand findeth to do, am endeavoring to do with my might. So many are comparatively easy without having on the white robe, that I have thought, if my being taken at a moment's warning would arouse the many for whom I have been interested, to feel abidingly the importance of being *ready*, I would be willing to be laid a sacrifice upon the service of the faith of the church in this matter also. Shall we not strive with *pen* and *voice*, and in every possible way to work while the day lasts?

P.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE CHRISTIAN'S MITRE.

"And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head." ZECH. III. 5.

The Mosaic dispensation was shadowy. Every department was replete with significant rites, which perpetually reminded the people of some great truth, or lifted the dark curtain of the future in such a manner, that faith became vigorous and steadfast in the coming substance. It has, however, passed, and the bright, luminous day of visible, living realities throws its acceptable light upon the world. Still the humble disciple finds much instruction and light in viewing the substantial blessedness of the present economy and its privileges, through the lofty ceremonials, and gorgeous trappings of the tabernacle and temple services. On the other hand, by the light of the new covenant he travels through this typical period with an abiding interest, finding in each department something illustrative of his duty, or significant of his privilege, which becomes invigorating to his faith, encouraging to his hope, refreshing to his love, and stimulating to his perseverance. Among other things, the High Priest's sacerdotal crown is remarkably significant. This was composed of two parts—the richly and curiously wrought turban which covered the head, and its golden plate, which covered the forehead. On this golden plate was inscribed or rather embossed in raised characters, "HOLINESS TO THE LORD," which marks at once his character, relations and duties. He was never to appear in his official character either in the presence of God or the people without this distinguishing badge of his office. We have no high priest now, of the Aaronic family, to offer for us our sacrifices, and we need

none. We have one, however, of Melchisedec's order, who hath "entered heaven itself, ever to appear in the presence of God for us," our merciful High Priest who is "touched with a feeling of our infirmities." Through his gracious sacrifice and atonement he hath effectually made provision for our purification from sin, and our adoption into his family. He burst the veil of the inner tabernacle and prepared the way for our approach directly to God, without the intervention of an Aaronic or ecclesiastical priest. In fact, every Christian, no matter how humble, no matter how unworthy, no matter how illiterate, is constituted his own *priest*, ministering at an altar, which sanctifies every gift laid upon it, the crucified Jesus. While therefore Israel had but a single family of priests, and but one high priest, at a time; the gospel constitutes all its sons and daughters *priests*, yea, *high priests*; because all are permitted to approach His presence, hold intercourse with him, and offer the pure incense of thanksgiving and praise. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and *priests* unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever." As therefore the children of God stand in this relation to him, they are entitled to all the distinguishing characteristics of the priestly office. The "fair mitre" with its frontal inscription was but the shadow of *holiness of heart* in the Christian. As the priest was never to enter the most holy place without it upon his head, so the Christian can never come successfully into the presence of God, either for himself, or for others, and plead for blessings, and obtain what he asks, unless he wear his official crown. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." When the heart is holy, cleansed from all its moral defilements, and renewed in the image of the Almighty, it never approaches the throne of the Eternal without acceptance and approval. God beholds his image there and delights to listen to the bold requests suggested by his Spirit reigning within the heart, and grants its lofty desires. Let the Christian church claim but the "fair mitre" of holiness, with what power would they pray and labor for God? How glorious would be their success? And it is their *right* to claim, receive and wear this glorious "mitre." God never constituted a priesthood but what he made provision for their proper habiliments, and also for suitable badges of distinction in their office. These were three, the ephod, breastplate and mitre. And has God left the race of Christian priests without the distinguishing garments? The Christian puts on his ephod, when he believes to the pardon of his sins, and the regeneration of his spirit. He is thus clothed with new and beautiful garments.

"The king's daughter is all glorious within. Her *clothing* is of wrought gold."

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

He puts on his breastplate when he becomes well instructed in the "*lights*" and "*perfections*" of the gospel plan of salvation, and so imbued with its hallowing and benevolent spirit, that in all his approaches to God, he bears on his heart the various "*tribes*" of Christian people as one, for the divine blessing. He takes the mitred crown of holiness, when he fully puts on Christ; when sanctified throughout, soul, body and spirit, and filled with the graces of the Holy Spirit. He continues to wear this crown as long as he keeps himself in the love of God, and is preserved blameless. If therefore we are priests, we have a right to the mitre. Our official dress is not complete without it.

Israel's priest could not enter the most holy place but once a year; there might be seasons, therefore, when he could dispense with his mitre. But the Christian priest can come to God and stand in his presence at all times, if he comes properly clothed. He not only *can* come at all times, and places, but God *requires* him to do so. Hence it is not only the *right* or *privilege* of the Christian to claim his official crown, but it is his imperious *duty*. There are no moments when he may lay it aside; and as it is not a wearisome one to wear, this duty will not appear hard.

1. The "*fair mitre*" of holiness therefore is a crown of unparalleled honor. No monarch's crown, however extensive his dominions, equals it in honor; for great as may be the dominion of an earthly king, it will last but a few years at most. This crown gives its wearer dominion over himself, and a title to a kingdom which lasts for ever.

2. It is a crown of intrinsic worth. It is beyond the price of rubies. The worth of a thousand kingdoms, though gold abounded in each, as in the best times of Solomon, would not purchase it, or one that could equal it in value. Its wearer, and he may be the poorest of the poor, a Lazarus, whose bread is the gift of charity, and whose nurse the dogs, is possessed of wealth incomputable and indescribable. The wealth of earth cannot be carried with us through the valley of death. The wealth of this crown will attend us, not only there, but for ever.

3. It is a crown of unequalled beauty. Where do we find beauty which equals purity of heart? What has earth to com-

pare with it? If we look upon features which are remarkably plain, and there is guilt at heart, how we loath that person! How disgusting! But if there is holiness within, its beauty shines out through the countenance, and we love and admire. The beauty of earth fades, but the beauty of this crown is lasting as the imperishable materials of which it is composed, or the God who gave it.

4. It is a crown of great practical utility. We cannot come successfully into the presence of God without it. When, then, it is always worn, with what success do we work for God, and the interest of his cause. Who so useful among us as the holy?

5. It is a crown of victory, not only of victory over self, but over the assaults of the devil, over fear, death and the grave.

6. It is a crown of life. He who wears it lives to God, lives in God and God lives in him, and if he continues to wear it, he will live with God for ever.

7. It is a crown of glory. "She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver unto thee." The Lord help us to claim and wear it.

G. W. STEARNS.

Wellfleet, Feb. 26, 1845.

DEAR BR. KING:—I very gratefully acknowledge, though late, brother O. C. Baker's correction of an error in one of my former articles. I assure your readers that, if I could have availed myself of so high authority, on so important a point as the witness of the Spirit in entire sanctification, I should have seized upon it with avidity. But it was ignorance and forgetfulness combined that led to the mistake. I acknowledge it and ask pardon of your readers. Now, dear friends, have you the witness of the Spirit that God hath, and doth cleanse you from all sin? Do you dwell in God and does God dwell in you? May this be the case with us all, is the prayer of

Your unworthy, yet sincere friend,

G. W. STEARNS.

THE SABBATH.—The happiness of heaven is the constant keeping of a Sabbath. Heaven is called a Sabbath, to make those who love Sabbaths long for Heaven, and to make those who long for Heaven love Sabbaths.—*Matthew Henry.*

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

WESLEY'S NOTES.

When we wish light and unction by the reading of commentaries, we take up Wesley's Notes on the New Testament. They are easy to be understood, and full of meaning. We have often regretted that they were not in more general use. Especially have we been surprised to find them wanting in the libraries of Clergymen.

But we took our pen to say that a new edition of this work has just been published at the Methodist Book Rooms, New York. It is a pocket edition on excellent paper. The whole book, as it is, does much credit to the publishers, and may God give abundant and gracious fruits to a multitude of readers.

As a specimen of the work, we copy the notes on the fourteenth chapter of John, without the text.

Verse 1. *Let not your heart be troubled*—At my departure. *Believe*—This is the sum of all his discourse, which is urged, till they did believe, John xvi, 30; and then our Lord prays and departs.

Verse 2. *In my Father's house are many mansions*—Enough to receive both the holy angels, and your predecessors in the faith, and all that now believe, and a great multitude which no man can number.

Verse 4. *The way*—Of faith, holiness, sufferings.

Verse 5. *Thomas saith*—Taking him in a gross sense.

Verse 6. To the question concerning the way, he answers, *I am the way*; to the question concerning knowledge, he answers, *I am the truth*; to the question whither, *I am the life*. The first is treated of in this verse; the second, verses 7-17; the third, verse 18, &c.

Verse 7. *Ye have known*—Ye have begun to know him.

Verse 10. *I am in the Father. The words that I speak, &c.*—That is, I am one with the Father in essence, in speaking, and in acting.

Verse 11. *Believe me*—On my own word. *Because I am*—God. *The works*—This respects not merely the miracles themselves, but his sovereign, God-like way of performing them.

Verse 12. *Greater works than these shall he do*—So one apostle wrought miracles merely by his shadow, Acts v. 15; another, by "handkerchiefs carried from his body," Acts xix, 12; and all spake with various tongues. But the converting one sinner is a greater work than all these. *Because I go to my Father*—to send you the Holy Ghost.

Verse 15. *If ye love me, keep my commandments*—Immediately after faith he exhorts to love and good works.

Verse 16. *And I will ask the Father*—The twenty-first verse shows the connection between this and the preceding verses. *And he will give you another Comforter*—The Greek word signifies also an advocate, instructor, or encourager. *Another*—For Christ himself was one. *To remain with you forever*—With you and your followers in faith to the end of the world.

Verse 17. *The Spirit of truth*—Who has, reveals, testifies, and defends the truth as it is in Jesus. *Whom the world*—All who do not love or fear God. *Cannot receive, because it seeth him not*—Having no spiritual senses, no internal eye, to discern him, nor, consequently, knoweth him. *He shall be in you*—As a constant guest. Your bodies and souls shall be temples of the Holy Ghost dwelling in you.

Verse 18. *I will not leave you orphans*—A word that is elegantly applied to those who have lost any dear friend. *I come to you*—What was certainly and speedily to be, our Lord speaks of as if it were already.

Verse 19. *But ye see me*—That is, ye shall certainly see me. *Because I live, ye shall live also*—Because I am the Living One in my divine nature, and shall rise again in my human nature, and live forever in heaven; therefore, ye shall live the life of faith and love on earth, and hereafter the life of glory.

Verse 20. *At that day*—When ye see me after my resurrection; but more eminently at the day of Pentecost.

Verse 21. *He that hath my commandments*—Written in his heart. *I will manifest myself to him*—More abundantly.

Verse 23. *Jesus answered*—Because ye love and obey me, and they do not, therefore I will reveal myself to you, and not to them. *My Father will love him*—The more any man loves and obeys, the more God will love him. *And we will come to him, and make our abode with him*—Which implies such a large manifestation of the divine presence and love, that the former, in justification, is as nothing in comparison of it.

Verse 26. *In my name*—For my sake, in my room, and as my agent. *He will teach you all things*—Necessary for you to know. Here is a clear promise to the apostles and their successors in the faith, that the Holy Ghost will teach them all that truth which is needful for their salvation.

Verse 27. *Peace I leave with you*—Peace in general; peace with God, and with your own consciences. *My peace*—In particular; that peace which I enjoy, and which I create. *I give*—At this instant. *Not as the world giveth*—Unsatisfying, unsettled, transient; but filling the soul with constant, even tranquillity. Lord, evermore give us this peace! How serenely may we pass through the most turbulent scenes of life, when all is quiet and harmonious within! Thou hast made peace through the blood of thy cross: may we give all diligence to preserve the inestimable gift inviolate, till it issue in everlasting peace!

Verse 28. *God the Father is greater than me*—As he was man. As God, neither is greater nor less than the other.

Verse 29. *I have told you*—Of my going and return.

Verse 30. *The prince of this world is coming*—To make his grand assault. *But he hath nothing in me*—No right, no claim, or power. There is no guilt in me to give him power over me; no corruption to take part with his temptation.

Verse 31. *But*—I suffer him thus to assault me, 1. Because it is the Father's commission to me, John x, 18. 2. To convince the world of my love to the Father, in being "obedient unto death," Phil. ii, 8. *Arise, let us go hence*—Into the city, to the passover. All that has been related from chap. xiii, 31, was done and said on Thursday, without the city. But what follows in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters was said in the city, on the very evening of the passover, just before he went over the brook Cedron.

RODRIGUEZ ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

(ALTERED BY THE EDITOR.)

THE GREAT VALUE WE OUGHT TO SET ON SPIRITUAL THINGS.

I wished for a right understanding of things, said one of old, and God gave it me; I called upon him, and he filled me with the spirit of wisdom, which I preferred before sceptres and crowns, and believed that riches and precious stones deserved not to be compared thereto; for all the gold and silver upon earth, is nothing but a little sand and clay, in comparison of wisdom. The true wisdom which all of us ought to desire is Christian perfection. Now this consists in uniting ourselves to God by love, according to those words of St. Paul,—*Above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.* We ought therefore to set as great value on perfection, and on every thing conducive to its attainment, as Solomon says he set on wisdom; and we ought to believe with St. Paul; and *count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.* This is the best means we have of attaining perfection. For the degree to which this esteem ascends in our hearts, will be the measure of our own spiritual advancement in particular, and of that of religion in general. The reason is, because we desire nothing but according to the estimation we hold it in. For our will being a blind faculty, that pursues nothing but what the understanding proposes to it, that value, which our understanding sets upon any object, becomes of necessity the measure of our desires:—and our will being the absolute mistress that commands all the interior and exterior faculties of our souls, we never exert ourselves for the attainment of any object, but according to that degree wherein our will is moved to desire it. In order, then, that we earnestly desire it, and diligently exert ourselves for its attainment, it is necessary that we hold in high estimation whatever relates to our advancement in perfection. For these things bear such reciprocal relation, that the measure of the one is the infallible rule of the other.

To carry on his trade to advantage, a jeweller should know well the value of precious stones: otherwise he may happen to sell at a low rate a jewel of great value. Our traffic is in precious stones,—*the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls.* We should therefore be good judges of

the merchandize we trade in, lest, by a strange abuse, we give gold for dirt, and part with heaven for earth. *Let not the wise man*, says our Savior, by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah, *glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might—let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me.* The most valuable of all treasures consists in the knowledge, love, and service of God: — this is our greatest, and indeed our only affair; or, to say better, it is for this we were created; for this we entered into religion; and it is in this alone, as in our only end, we ought to repose ourselves, and establish our greatest glory.

I wish therefore that this esteem of perfection, and of spiritual things conducive to it, would make a deep impression on the hearts of all, and particularly of religious men; and that we take care to encourage each other to it, not only by our words and ordinary conversation, but much more by our actions, and the general tenor of our lives. By this means, those as yet but children in the way of virtue, and such as are more advanced in it, and all in general must acknowledge, that in religion we should attach importance to spiritual things only. In fine, as Ignatius sets forth in his Constitutions, “What we value most in religious persons, is not depth of learning, nor great talents for preaching, nor any other natural or human endowment; but it is humility and obedience, a spirit of recollection and prayer.” It is this we must, from the beginning, imprint on the minds of all who are received into religion, and it is with this milk, they who intend to lead a holy life, must be first fed. When they perceive that, of all things, piety is most valued, that it is the practice, those convinced of the vanity of the world, are engaged in, and that the pious are chiefly loved and esteemed, then they will presently apply their thoughts, and use their endeavors, not to acquire great learning, or to become famous preachers, but to excel each other in humility and mortification. By this, however, I do not mean, that gaining general esteem or good will, should be our motive for embracing virtue. I only assert, that when it shall be known that virtue is the only thing esteemed in religion, we shall be more convinced that it is the only thing truly deserving of esteem. For every one coming thus to the knowledge of the true way, in which he should walk, will devote himself without reserve to virtue — will apply himself solely to his spiritual advancement, and will believe that every thing else is but vanity and folly.

From all this, it can be readily inferred, what a dangerous ex-

ample is set religious societies, by those who introduce no other topic than human science, and who are constantly bestowing praises on such as are eminent for learning. This example is the more dangerous, because, seeing them so highly valued by the graver sort of men, new beginners will conclude that it is by the acquisition of these things, they will be entitled to respect and preferment. Upon this account, learning is the only object they propose to themselves, and the desire of acquiring it increasing daily, the love of humility and mortification insensibly decays in their hearts. At length, they make so little account of the one in comparison of the other, that, from intense application to study, they omit what is of strictest obligation. Hence it comes to pass, that many of them relax, are perverted, and forsake religion. Now, instead of instilling into the minds of these beginners the vain desire of being reputed men of learning, were it not better to represent to them how important and necessary a thing it is to acquire virtue and humility, and how unprofitable, or rather how dangerous it is, without humility, to be possessed of talents and learning?

In his Life of Fulgentius, Surius has a passage very applicable to the present subject. He tells us, that among the religious in charge of this good man, there were some who labored hard, and devoted themselves entirely to the service of the community, but who applied not with equal fervor to prayer, spiritual reading, and interior recollection. Now Fulgentius never thought so much of these, as of others. He always showed a far greater love and esteem for those, who, though unable by reason of their weak and sickly constitution, to be of any service to society, were yet devoted to spiritual things, and careful to advance in virtue. And doubtless he acted right.—For, if we are not humble and submissive, what will it avail us to have talents and other good qualities? If on this ground we claim greater liberties and exemptions, it certainly were far better for us never to have had talents at all. The case were different indeed, if in the account, which is one day to be demanded of the pastor, God should ask him,—Were his people men of study and science? But no! these are the questions God will ask him: Have those committed to your charge improved themselves in the science of saints? Have they advanced daily in virtue? Have they been employed according to their talents, without suffering their exterior occupations to check their interior advancement? It is this, in the opinion of a very holy man, for which every particular person also shall be accountable to Almighty God, who, on the day of judgment will not ask us what we have read, but what we

have done — nor how learnedly we have spoken, but how religiously we have lived?

The sacred text relates, that our blessed Savior, having sent his disciples to preach, they returned full of joy, telling him, that *even the devils were subject to them, through his name.* To whom our Savior answered, — *In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.* We ought, then, to place all our joy and happiness in acquiring the kingdom of heaven, for without that, all the rest are nothing. *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*

And if we say, what our Savior himself says, that these occupations which tend to the conversion of souls ought not to make us forget what we owe to our own salvation, since it were useless to have contributed to save all the world, if we do not endeavor to save ourselves,—what may we not, with greater reason, say of other occupations? Certainly, it is unreasonable in a religious man, to be so entirely absorbed in study, or in any other worldly employment, as to neglect his interior; to neglect prayer, examination of conscience, and the cross of Christ; to give to spiritual things the last and lowest place in his thoughts; to employ, in devotion, that time only which remains after the discharge of other duties, and in case he could not compass both, to choose rather to omit his spiritual duties, than to be remiss in the others. This, in a word, were to live not as a religious person, but as a man who had no relish for heavenly things.

Dorotheus reports, that his disciple, Dositheus, discharged the duty of infirmarian so well, was so attentive to the sick, made their beds, dressed their rooms, kept all things so neat, and in such good order, that the saint, going one day to visit the infirmary, Dositheus said to him, “I have a thought of vain glory, which tells me, that I do my duty perfectly well in this employment; and methinks you ought to be perfectly well satisfied with me.” But the answer of the good man gave a check to the presumption of his disciple. “I allow,” said Dorotheus, “that you are grown a very good infirmarian, and very careful; but I do not perceive, as yet, that you are become a good religious man.” Let every one, therefore, use his utmost endeavors, that no man may say of him, you are a good infirmarian, or a good porter—you are a great scholar, a learned doctor, or a celebrated preacher; but you are not a good religious man. For, in fact, we entered religion only to become truly religious. It is this character we ought to prefer to all others; it is this we ought to seek after with the utmost diligence, and have perpetually before

our eyes. Indeed all other things, compared to our advancement in piety, ought to be looked upon as accessaries only, according to the words of our Savior— *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

THE INTERIOR OR HIDDEN LIFE.

BY MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

[The following notice of the "Interior Life," evidently by a sweet spirit and an able hand, would be truly welcome, even from a hidden source, but coming, as it does, from Mrs. Stowe, and through the New York Evangelist, it will be the occasion of much joy to the lovers of holiness. We hope to be excused for the few brief notes which we have thought proper to append.]

It is one of the hopeful symptoms of our times, that a work of a character as that whose title we have given above, from the pen of Prof. Thomas C. Upham, so purely spiritual, should receive so wide and welcome a reception. Though issuing from the press silently, unannounced by advertisements, and unnoticed by any leading periodical, yet, as we have been informed, the first edition of twelve hundred copies was entirely disposed of in six months, and another pressingly demanded.* This shows the existence of a silent but deep want in the Christian community, which a work of this class is adapted to meet.

The character of the work is well expressed by the title, "The Principles of the Interior or Hidden Life; addressed to those who are seeking *assurance of faith or perfect love.*" To some, in these days of business-like, external religion, this may have a mystical sound, savoring strongly of fanaticism, and they may approach it with a brisk controversial air, expecting to find matter for immediate assault.

We would say, however, that the character of its author, known hitherto only as a clear metaphysician, the classic, unruffled purity of the style, the evidence of varied literary acquisition, and of habits of calm discrimination in the work itself, and above all, the solemn, religious tranquillity which pervades it, forbid the supposition of common fanaticism. If it be fanati-

* About three thousand copies have been sold. The work is now to be stereotyped.

cism, it is of a character so grave, so delicate, so absorbing, and so strong, that it will require great care and thought properly to appreciate and reply to it. But it may be asked, What is assurance of faith and perfect love, and who are the class so confidently designated as seeking it?

It is well known that there has long existed in the church a high form of Christian experience, which, in different times, circumstances and denominations, has received different appellations, but which always develops itself so much alike in phenomena, that German, Swede or American, Moravian, Lutheran, Methodist or Presbyterian, experience answers to each other, as face answereth to face in the water. It has been called indifferently "assurance of faith, assurance of hope, baptism of the Spirit, perfect love, perfect trust, entire consecration;" and latterly, and we think erroneously, the same form of experience has received from some the designation of *Christian perfection*, or *entire sanctification*.* From this last unfortunate misapplication of terms, and the singular and erroneous metaphysical principles which have been adopted in support of it, has arisen in many minds a prejudice against this sacred form of experience itself, and a disposition to look with an eye of incredulity on all developments of extraordinary Christian attainment, especially when they come with any great suddenness or power. But it is an undoubted fact, that there is now in the minds of a large class, scattered all through the Christian community, an influence determining them to the seeking of this attainment, under what-

* These terms are not of mere modern application. It was, we believe, common in the church to talk of Christian Perfection, centuries ago. And if it be an error to use them now, it cannot be because they are not legitimately as scriptural as "assurance of faith," or "perfect hope." We are commanded again and again to be perfect. Why may we not insist upon the same thing now in the very language of the Bible? Proper qualifications of the term are understood. It was the prayer of St. Paul, "And may the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Suppose we have faith to receive this blessing for which the apostle prayed, would it not be "entire sanctification?" We allow that fanatics have made an improper use of these terms. But we should not abandon them on that account. Rather should we let a consistent and holy life and profession bring them into favor with the church. In the relation of our own experience, while we give credit for all the Lord has done for us, we should be careful in the use of terms; but when we enforce God's requirements, it seems appropriate to do it in the language of Scripture. However, if the church will seek the blessing recommended, we will not be tenacious about the name of it.

ever different form of expression they have been wont to recognize it. Under this strong influence, Christians, before accounted of good standing in the church, appear to themselves and to others to have experienced a kind of second regeneration, and the change in their own eyes, and in that of others, is almost as great as in a first conversion. Living near a theological seminary, to which leading Christian minds are flocking from different parts of the country, the writer has been cognizant of this tendency as pervading minds here and there in all parts of the West. In some cases it has expressed itself in strong and marked forms. A Christian, hitherto considered as perhaps in more than usually fair standing, becomes silent, pensive, unusually drawn to reflection and prayer, a deep sense of internal spiritual want seems to press upon the mind, with all the depth of a first conviction, and under this pressure individuals have been known to give up for days all other pursuits, and devote themselves to the subject entirely, and the result has been a change which appears to revolutionize the whole style of Christian character. In other cases, this same change appears to come on gradually in a course of spirituality, gradually increasing for years. The most striking and unobjectionable printed illustration of this form of experience is afforded in the life of J. B. Taylor, whom Providence appears to have raised up for the very purpose of showing it in a striking and specific form. There have doubtless, also, been a few instances where the same attainment seemed to be made so gradually, that the Christian, in looking back, could not decide when it began. Of this a striking instance was furnished in the case of an elder, late of the church of Lane Seminary. He was a man of such blameless innocence of life and manners, of such invariable Christian humility and sweetness of spirit, as to be universally beloved even by the dissolute and profane, and in a neighborhood where he had lived over forty years, it was not ascertained on inquiry that a fault had been ever alleged against him. He told his pastor on his death-bed, that he had been called to Christ under the ministry of George Whitefield, at the age of fifteen; and with an eye beaming with gentle and holy peace, he added, "*and I have never had a dark hour since!*" Seventy years of unbroken "*peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost!*" What a retrospect for a dying-bed! We can scarcely wonder that his eldest son, a minister of the Methodist denomination, seeing, as he did, the triumphant close of so triumphant a life, should have shouted "*Glory to God!*" with all the impulsive energy of his sect. The last words of this old patriarch, in beautiful accordance with his life, were "*Perfect peace!*"

The outward phenomena which attend this form of religious experience when fully developed, seem to be an unusual calmness, a triumphant rest of spirit, a power in the rapid and effective subjugation of all evil habits, which sometimes astonishes the looker-on. An unwonted power attends all the efforts of these Christians to do good—to them all places and circumstances seem alike—always fervent, always cheerful, they seem to have within themselves a fountain of joy that enables them to dispense with all accessions from outward circumstances; they delight to throw themselves into the hardest fields of labor, and literally seem to take pleasure in reproaches, in necessities, in distresses for Christ's sake.

It is remarkable too, that this state is a permanent one; a state in which the Christian is exempt from the vacillation, retrocession and defeat, which has been so often mourned over that many seem to have resigned themselves to take them as matters of course. That Shakspeare of the Christian allegory, old John Bunyan, has beautifully imaged it as the land of Beulah, where the Christian realizes individually, the promise made to the millennial church, "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and the *days of thy mourning shall be ended.*" In this state, even constitutional errors and imperfections seem in a more than usual measure superseded by the power of grace; characteristic irritability is replaced by meekness; self-confidence by humility; constitutional despondency by habitual cheerfulness and hope. None but those who have personally witnessed these changes, can sufficiently appreciate the mighty workings of that inward experience to which they are attributed.

We rejoice in this work of Professor Upham's, as presenting a tangible and definite point to the efforts of those who have long felt within themselves the need of a higher spiritual life. In so long a work, extending over so wide a range of topics, and touching nearly on points which unhappily for the church have been made controversial ground, we should think it strange if there were not some parts to which in some minds exceptions might be taken. The author, as we understand, disclaims the peculiar philosophy of Oberlin,* while he recognizes all that is valuable in those undoubtedly genuine experiences which have existed in

* We shall leave our Oberlin friends to say whether they differ from Dr. Upham on *sanctification*. We have not supposed that they did. We have never discovered any discrepancies between the excellent work of President "Mahan on Sanctification," and the "Interior Life."

connection with it. It may be thought that in some cases the author's views have been too much tinged by the shadow of monastic and mystical writings ; that it arrives at last too much at mere quietism.* All these things may be said ; and yet, without undertaking to endorse the truth of every metaphysical or philosophical principle in it, the Christian may from his heart rejoice that such a work has been given to the church.

The whole state of the times seems to call for an effort to bring back the Christian mind to a deeper internal scrutiny and life. For these last fifty years there has been, if we may use the expression, a universal tendency to *outwardness* in religion. The whole great system of benevolent organization, the whole formation of the outward tactics necessary for efficient millennial action, has fallen into these times, and been eliminated with surprising rapidity. For a time, when the powerful principle of voluntary organization began to display its results, the church seemed so much delighted with what she could do, that she was ready to exclaim with the Apostles, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us." Was there any abuse in society ; any sin in the churches ; any desolation in the kingdom of Christ anywhere, get up a society, was the universal prescription, and the work was considered done.

Satan was fairly considered as outvoted ; and what with the number of societies and speeches, and the rush of Christian business, with which of course he could have nothing to do, he began to be looked upon as quite a superannuated person, quite run down by the steam power of this latter day. The financial cares of the church, and all the current of clerico-secular business, rushing through various religious organizations, brought the same temptations to hurry of mind and to neglect of devotional culture, that are brought by business in any form. Places began to multiply in the church, for which the inquiry was less—"Is he holy? is he mighty in faith and prayer?" than—"Is he *driving*, efficient, and of good business talent?" A spirit began to manifest itself which in effect reversed one of the great principles of Christianity. "Only keep on *acting* for Christ, and your *heart* will keep right," began to be often said and acted upon — much talk of experiences and *inward history* began to be rather coolly regarded ; and the deep spiritual exercises and trials of our fa-

* All fears of this kind may be banished. It may not be exactly to the point, but we advise our readers to give his article in the April GUIDE, "On the Relation between quietness of spirit and energy of action," a thorough reading.

thers, centuries ago, to be looked upon as showing rather a want of discrimination in the matter of nervous infirmity.

But while the church has been, by the grace of God, enabled to do a great and glorious work in thus organizing the grand frame of benevolent enterprise, and developing a system of efficient, energetic action, are there not signs which show that she must turn her attention again *within*? When ministers, successful in revivals, active and capable in the efficiencies of the day, are found to have been living in deadly immorality; when, now that the great system of benevolent action is organized; missions, schools, printing-presses, all standing ready, loud complaints are heard that Christians have not self-denial and benevolence enough to carry them on—is it not time for each one to awake and examine for himself whether there is the true spiritual oil in the lamp? May there not be in the bosom of the church those prophesying and casting out devils, to whom Christ will profess, *I never knew you?* May there not be among real Christians those to whom religion has come to be a matter of habits and forms, which were once the result of warm, ever-present love, but from which that delicate spirit has exhaled, as the fragrance exhales from the gathered rose, while yet form and bloom remain? It is in vain ministers denounce luxury and worldliness in the church. In vain A lectures B for giving thirty thousand for a fashionable house, when B recriminates by showing that in proportion to his means, he does no more than his brother A. It is in vain by mere force of external organization to stop the Sabbath travelling and Sabbath business of Christians. These are but outward signs of deep inward disease. Every minister—every Christian—each alone and for himself—must look inward for the cause and the cure, and must rejoice in every work which turns the eye in that direction. The experience described in Professor Upham's work may be looked upon as utterly hopeless as a mark for personal attainment. Yet the history of the church in all ages shows instances how it has been attained. In another number we shall add some further remarks on the work, illustrated by authentic cases of experience.

God's REQUIREMENT.—Man is no sooner made, than he is set to work: neither greatness nor perfection can privilege a *folded hand*. How much more cheerfully we go about our business, so much the nearer we come to our Paradise.—*Bp. Hall.*

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

INDUCEMENTS TO SEEK FOR ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.

THUS WE SHALL BE, SECONDLY, MORE HAPPY.

That those who are entirely sanctified are more happy, may appear so trite, so self evident, that some may be ready to pass it over as unworthy a thought. But let us look at it a moment.

1. What if we ourselves were, as we have often desired to be, as we have indeed promised to be, and as our consciences tell us we ought to be, so entirely consecrated to God that we could from our inmost souls say,

“Claim me for thy service, claim
All I have and all I am!”

should we not be happier? What if our friends, our children, were so dedicated to Him that, whether they should be spared to us, or called home, we could truly adopt the language of David, “The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord,” could we not with a more joyful heart, meet these ills of life? And if our property was so laid on the altar, that with a single eye we could look on it as the property of God, and on ourselves as his stewards, so that all desire either to lay up treasure on earth, or be anxious for the morrow, might be banished, could we not expect a calmer peace than is now our lot? Finally, what if all our plans were so laid that we could come before God and confidently ask his paternal blessing on each, and expect that he would take the oversight of all, and cause all to work together for our good, should we not more gladly go forward in the performance of whatsoever our hands find to do? Yet entire sanctification implies grace that we thus consecrate all to God; and surely, thus consecrated, we are *more happy*.

2. But this dedication is not enough. There might still lurk in our hearts something of that corruption inherited from Adam. The love of the world might be there. Who has not felt it? Who has not sighed that it might be purged away? And fretfulness might be there; fretfulness—which has all the appearance of evil. And who can be happy while continually irritated by such an inward sore? And it is possible that even anger might be there! for, strange as it may appear, we have seen even Christians giving way to anger! And O! how can one who has promised to be like Christ be happy, while led captive, though it be only occasionally, by so vile a passion? There, too, might be

selfishness—selfishness, which says, “Be ye warmed and filled,” while it gives not those things needful for the body; that lays up treasures on earth, though they may eat as it were fire, while millions of the heathen are perishing for want of that bread of life which these our treasures might send them; selfishness, which sets up itself in the place of God, and by actions, if not by words, says, “Not thy will, but mine!” Ah! who that has lived a Christian, though it has been but a few weeks, but has felt this corruption, but has cried out, in bitterness of spirit, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!” Who would not be happier, if thus delivered from selfishness, from anger, from fretfulness, from love of the world, and from the long—long catalogue of things unclean in the eyes of a holy God? One completely cleansed by the blood of Christ, is thus delivered, is *happier!*

3. Though this blessing did no more for us than to enable us to make a complete consecration of our all to God, and to purify us from all remaining depravity, we should be justified in saying, that it made us more happy. But it does more. The love that first caused us to rejoice in God it increases, until it becomes *perfect* love. The sweet peace and holy joy which at times before afforded so rich a feast, it renders not only deep, but abiding. Our faith, which then so frequently wavered, it strengthens, so that it lays a firm hold on the promises of God: resignation, meekness, temperance, it causes to *dwell* with us, so that our life is no longer marked with constant change, but a more calm, a more uniform experience is our blissful portion. As we sing,—

“I would were He always thus nigh,
Have nothing to wish or to fear;”

so it is; for the Holy Ghost takes up his abode in our hearts, and Jesus is “thus nigh,” as our constant guest, yea, more, companion. We need not now appeal to the union of our espousals; a closer union, a more fervent love is ours. All this does holiness for us in this life; but when we look beyond the grave, we see that there this tree bears still richer fruit. Are there, in that world, mansions of varied joy, and is one of the redeemed introduced into a brighter abode than another? Does one escape, as through fire, while to another there is an abundant entrance administered? Does one appear there as a star of the first magnitude, so prominent on the face of heaven as to be noticed by the least observing, while others are scarce seen even by the telescope? Holiness, above every thing else, thus causes them to differ—holiness, without which great talents, extensive opportunities for usefulness, may prove a curse—holiness that purifies

the motive, and increases the activity in the cause of God. Surely then we were right, when we said, one entirely sanctified is MORE HAPPY.

T. H. MUDGE.

Leominster, March 1, 1845.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

EVERY DAY EXPERIENCE.

(Continued.)

July 10.—My mind has been drawn out unusually of late to pray that God would so control my whole mental being, as to bring every thought into subjection to Himself. Why may not my intellect, my memory, my imagination be so subject to God, as to become a storehouse of holy thoughts and images? What measures shall I adopt to secure this object? I answer, *faith in God.* He can do it, and more specific faith may effect the object. As far as may subserve thy glory, O thou Eternal Mind, I would pray for an enlargement and improvement of my mental capacities. Save me from all vain imaginations, from idle and wandering thoughts. Save me from all unprofitable recurrence to past actions which cannot be amended. Let my mind rather be engrossed with God and present duty. I find it greatly for my spiritual benefit, yea, indispensable, to dismiss the thoughts regarding past exercises and acts, whether pleasing or painful; also, not to permit my mind to run in advance of the present time. I live only in the present moment, for the present passing moment only am I responsible. By thus taking care of each moment, my course of life will become comparatively easy, and I may expect to find grace equal to my necessities.

July 14.—Experienced some painful temptations to evil yesterday. They seemed to be repeated, and to be still more apparent and distressing in my dreams in the night. But this morning my whole soul is calm, and resting quietly in God. My mind, my roving intellect seems more and more to draw towards God as to its centre and its rest.

July 18.—I now feel as if I had come into the central attraction of God. Sanctification of mind, every thought brought into captivity, has been my experience for a few days past. It is surpassingly blessed; beyond the power of language to express what it is to the soul, thus to find God. My heart has long dwelt with Him; but O, this tossing to and fro, this scattering of the intellect—where shall it find a basis, and rest at ease? It now seems to have stretched itself to God; or rather God, in answer to my prayer, has come to my mind, and let me know what it is to have my mind stayed on Him, yea, united with his mind. O blessed union with the Eternal Mind! Thus are the drops of Heaven's own bliss exhaled, and poured out, a delicious fragrance, into the soul of man. O let me be ever looking up, as the eagle towards heaven, nor stop, nor tire, until all I have and am is wholly lost in God.

V. W.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

[Some people, under the impression that such notices are "stereotyped," have but little interest in them. If they are so, the following, from the *Oberlin Evangelist* of April 9th, by J. A. T., is an exception.]

Died, on the 6th inst., at the residence of her father, in Bainbridge, O., Miss DEBORAH J. McCARTY.

As Miss McC. was a member of the Female Department of this Institution, a brief account of her happy departure will be interesting to many of our readers. A letter from a deeply afflicted friend of the deceased, gives the following statement.

"She passed in smiles from earth to heaven. Most of the time during her sickness she entertained hopes of her recovery, but still uniformly expressed an implicit acquiescence in the will of God. The day before her death she conversed freely with her friends, endeavouring to comfort them with the assurance that she should make a happy exchange, and she rejoiced in the thought that they would soon meet her in a happier world. During the night, being very restless, she conversed much on various subjects, and her conversation seemed more like that of one who had already spent much time in heaven, than of one just going there. A few hours before her death she desired her mother to sing 'O land of rest, for which I sigh,' &c.; when they came to the words 'How long O Lord, wilt thou delay'—she broke out in an ecstasy and sung several times aloud, though she had not been able to speak above a whisper for several days previous. In the morning, she sweetly and quietly took her departure for the 'land of rest.'

"She is now happy, but she has left a circle of sorrowing friends. O how quick the frost of grief can wither every pleasant anticipation here. But we will not repine. We too are on our journey to the 'Land of Rest'—and would almost wish to speed the moments on."

A WORD TO THE MOURNER.

In concluding the above account of the death of a lovely female, the afflicted writer exclaims—"Why should earth be prematurely deprived of its few loveliest ornaments to enrich the already glorious society of the world of bliss?"

Sorrowing brother, doth not thine own faith solve the question which thy grief so naturally suggests? We doubt it not. But since thy sorrow asks the sympathetic response of a friend, we withhold not the solace; for if ever there be a time when most especially we feel constrained to administer the cup of water to a disciple in the name of a disciple, it is when the cooling draught is asked to assuage the intensity of grief in bereavement's bitter

hour.—“Why should earth be prematurely deprived of its few loveliest ornaments to enrich the already glorious society of the world of bliss?”

1. Because the earth is not worthy of them. “Of whom the world was not worthy,” is the inspired epitaph over the tomb of all the believing dead.

2. Because it *is* a “world of bliss” to which they go. Why should they tarry here! It is not mercy to them surely, but rather mercy to others which continues them on earth. Here they are imprisoned in clay dungeons—they dwell in exile. Shall we be heard to exclaim—“Why are they so prematurely released—why are they so prematurely bidden home?”

3. That they may rest from their labors. When the weary spirit is drawn out to sing—“O land of rest for which I sigh,”—and breaks forth in a ecstasy of anticipation and impatient ardor—“How long, O Lord, wilt thou delay?” it is divine compassion in the Redeemer to speak, saying, “Come unto me, thou that art weary and heavy laden, and I will give thee rest.”

4. But the lovely, the blooming, the youthful, why should they be take so prematurely? To bring heaven *nearer* to us who remain. We are prone to view heaven as ‘afar off.’ While all our friends are about us this illusion is strengthened. The occasional departure of a gray-headed sire or wrinkled matron does not serve to awaken us from this dream, for time has gradually separated between us and them, and removed them to an indefinitely distant point, “quite on the verge of heaven”—whence death can take them without affecting us. But when our youthful companions are taken from our side, when those whose hands and hearts are interlocked in ours, and who therefore seem not a hair’s breadth nearer the eternal world than we ourselves, when these “enter into that within the vail,” how near heaven comes to us. And as ever and anon some youthful friend steps into heaven, dropping his mantle upon us, the farewell scarce dying upon our ear before the ravished spirit joins in the everlasting anthem—we are prompted to exclaim “this is none other than the gate of heaven.” These dispensations are among our greatest mercies. They keep heaven near us. They are like the rapid passages of our steam ships across the ocean, which bring the old world near. Only how much nearer is heaven! How indefinitely far heaven would appear from us, if none died till old age. Who would have it so? What greater blessing could the youthful Christian confer upon earth by living, than he does by dying and thus bringing heaven to our very doors? O my brother, is such a death premature? With these words, let thy heart be comforted—“there is but a step between me and heaven.”